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291508Z Mar 01

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INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	USNW-00
	DODE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EUR-00	VC-00	HHS-01	H-01
	SSA-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	L-00	VCE-00	AC-01
	DCP-01	NSAE-00	OES-01	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00
	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	SSO-00	TRSE-00
	USIE-00	BBG-00	R-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8532  
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE  
NSC WASHDC  
SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 HARARE 001169

SIPDIS

LONDON FOR GURNEY

PARIS FOR WILLIAMS

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR JENDAYI FRAZER

PASS USAID FOR A-AA/AFR - V. DICKSON-HORTON,  
AFR/SA - C. PALMA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/29/11

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE CONSULTS WITH  
DONORS ON GOZ RESPONSE TO MALLOCH-BROWN LETTER

REF: HARARE 1016

CLASSIFIED BY CHARGE D'AFFAIRES EARL M. IRVING FOR  
REASONS 1.5 B/D.

11. (C) SUMMARY: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (UNDP) RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE VICTOR ANGELO CONVENED A MEETING OF DIPLOMATIC HEADS OF MISSION MARCH 28 TO DISCUSS THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE MALLOCH-BROWN LETTER (REFTEL). MOST OF THE DIPLOMATS SAID THAT THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE GAVE THE DONOR COMMUNITY PRECIOUS LITTLE WITH WHICH TO WORK, ALTHOUGH SOME SAW MERIT IN THE FACT THAT IT ANSWERED AT ALL. IN GENERAL, HOWEVER, THE DONORS WERE UNSYMPATHETIC WITH THE GOVERNMENT'S PLEA FOR ASSISTANCE ON THE FAST TRACK RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM, A NON-NEGOTIABLE ITEM. THE LETTER'S FAILURE TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF RULE OF LAW IN THE BROADEST SENSE WAS THE PRINCIPAL CONCERN OF MOST DONORS. THEY ASKED ANGELO TO CONTINUE ENGAGING THE GOVERNMENT, PUTTING ACROSS THEIR CONCERNS AND ASKING FOR CLARIFICATION OF SOME OF THE TERMS USED IN THE LETTER. ALTHOUGH THE MALLOCH-BROWN INITIATIVE APPEARS TO BE COLLAPSING, THE VICTIM OF THE UNDP'S MISBEGOTTEN ROLE OF TACKLING THE LAND QUESTION INSTEAD OF RULE OF LAW, WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN THE UTILITY OF DIALOGUE WITH THE GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

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12. (C) UNDP RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE VICTOR ANGELO CONVENED DIPLOMATIC HEADS OF MISSION ON MARCH 28 FOR A DISCUSSION ON THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE'S RESPONSE TO UNDP ADMINISTRATOR MALLOCH-BROWN'S DECEMBER 15 LETTER TO PRESIDENT MUGABE (REFTEL). THERE WERE BASICALLY TWO GROUPS: THOSE WHO WERE VERY NEGATIVE (UK, GERMANY, NETHERLANDS, AND CANADA), AND THOSE WHO WERE LOOKING FOR SOMETHING POSITIVE IN THE RESPONSE (ITALY, FRANCE, BELGIUM AND ARGENTINA). (COMMENT: THE LIKELY DONORS ARE IN THE FORMER, NOT THE LATTER GROUP. END COMMENT.)

13. (C) POSITIVE ASPECTS, AS PITCHED BY ANGELO, WERE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE RESPONDED (RATHER THAN IGNORED THE LETTER), USED DIPLOMATIC LANGUAGE, AND ENDORSED CONTINUING DIALOGUE WITH THE DONORS, BUT WITHOUT SPECIFYING MODALITIES. SOME DONORS WELCOMED THE GOVERNMENT'S ACCEPTANCE OF A TRUST FUND (WHICH IS PROVIDED FOR IN THE CONSTITUTION) AND ESTABLISHING A TECHNICAL UNIT WITHIN THE OFFICES OF THE UNDP, BUT NO ONE INDICATED THEY ARE READY TO OFFER FUNDING.

(COMMENT: NEITHER THE BRITISH NOR WE ARE PREPARED TO SUPPORT A TECHNICAL UNIT WITHIN UNDP AT THIS TIME BECAUSE IT IS IN THE WRONG PLACE: IT ESTABLISHES DONOR AND NOT ZIMBABWEAN CAPACITY. MOREOVER, ANY TECHNICAL SUPPORT UNIT AT THIS TIME WOULD SUPPORT THE FAST-TRACK RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM. END COMMENT.) THE GOVERNMENT'S APPEAL TO CONTINUED DIALOGUE WAS UNANIMOUSLY VIEWED AS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT, ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO DEARTH OF THOSE WHO CONSIDER IT LITTLE MORE THAN A COMBINED PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORT AND DELAYING TACTIC. ON THE

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ISSUE OF DIALOGUE, VIRTUALLY ALL THE DONORS WANT A TIMEFRAME SPELLED OUT FOR THE PROCESS, REALIZING THAT DELAY (AS THE LETTER'S 90 DAY PLUS TURNAROUND HAS SHOWN) ONLY WIDENS THE GULF AND PLAYS INTO THE GOVERNMENT'S POLITICAL GAME PLAN.

14. (C) ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE, MOST OBSERVERS AGREED THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE'S POSITION HAS NOT CHANGED AND OBSERVED THAT THE FAST-TRACK RESETTLEMENT EXERCISE REMAINS NON-NEGOTIABLE. THE BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER POINTED OUT THE FUNDAMENTAL CONTRADICTION IN THE UNDP PLAN THAT APPROACHES THE LAND REFORM PROGRAM AS A DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE, RATHER THAN A POLITICAL POWER PLAY. IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT RESPONSE IGNORES THE CORE ISSUE OF THE RULE OF LAW, EXCEPT FOR THE CLAIM THAT ITS FAST-TRACK RESETTLEMENT EXERCISE IS FULLY LEGAL, AN ASSERTION THAT THE CANADIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER DESCRIBED AS "BREATH-taking." THE RESPONSE LETTER YIELDS NO CONCESSIONS TO DONOR CONCERNS AND MAKES THE ABSURD CLAIM THAT 60,000 FAMILIES HAVE ALREADY BEEN RESETTLED ON TWO MILLION HECTARES IN UNDER ONE YEAR'S TIME. FINALLY, THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT BLAMES EVERYONE (E.G., THE DONORS AND THE COMMERCIAL FARMERS UNION) EXCEPT ITSELF FOR ITS CURRENT PREDICAMENT, AND FAILS

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TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT FIVE DONORS ACTUALLY DELIVERED SOMETHING TO ADVANCE THE CAUSE OF LAND REFORM IN ZIMBABWE. MANY HEADS OF MISSION HAD DIFFICULTY VIEWING FAVORABLY THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE TO CLEAN UP THE MESS CREATED BY ITS FAST-TRACK RESETTLEMENT EXERCISE, ABOUT WHICH THE DONORS HAD WARNED IT.

15. (C) THERE WAS CONSENSUS THAT IT WAS PREMATURE TO BEGIN ASSISTING THE GOZ'S LAND REFORM PROGRAM, PARTICULARLY AS THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE HAS NOT ADDRESSED THE DONORS' CONCERNS WITH THE RESPECT TO THE RULE OF LAW. NEVERTHELESS, ALL DONORS EXPRESSED THE DESIRE TO FOSTER DIALOGUE WITHIN A SPECIFIED TIME

FRAME WITH BOTH THE GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AND THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC CONSULTATIVE FORUM, A POSSIBLE VEHICLE FOR SUCH ENGAGEMENT. THE DONORS REQUESTED VICTOR ANGELO TO SEEK CLARIFICATION ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NECF AND THE CABINET LAND COMMITTEE. REGARDING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, THE DONORS INSISTED THAT A CLEAR DISTINCTION HAD TO BE MADE BETWEEN THAT FOR THE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM (I.E., THE MAN-MADE CRISIS) AND THAT FOR NATURAL DISASTERS (I.E., DROUGHTS AND FLOODS).

16. (C) ANGELO AGREED TO CONSULT WITH THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT BEGINNING MARCH 30 AND PUT ACROSS THE  
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DONORS' VIEWS. HE WILL EXPLORE AMBIGUITIES IN THE LETTER, INCLUDING WHAT PRECISELY THE ZIMBABWEAN GOVERNMENT MEANS BY ITS LABELING OF THE CHAOTIC PROCESS AS A "LEGAL (HOW IT UNDERSTANDS THE RULE OF LAW), TRANSPARENT AND EQUITABLE (BENEFICIARY SELECTION) LAND REFORM PROGRAM." THE UNDP RESREP UNDERSTOOD THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PACKAGE HIS POINTS IN SUCH A WAY THAT THE GOVERNMENT DOES NOT SLAM THE DOOR IN HIS FACE.

17. (C) COMMENT: WE HAVE NUMEROUS PROBLEMS WITH THE UNDP'S APPROACH TO THIS ENTERPRISE. RATHER THAN TRYING TO FIND A SOLUTION TO THE LAND QUESTION, IT SHOULD HAVE TACKLED THE OVER-ARCHING ISSUE OF THE RULE OF LAW THAT WILL TRIP UP ANY DONOR HEADQUARTERS AND MOST LEGISLATIVE BRANCHES. THE UNITED NATIONS IS THE BEST PLACED, IF NOT THE ONLY, ORGANIZATION ABLE TO DO SO. THE UNITED NATIONS WAS TRAPPED INTO TAKING ON THE LAND ISSUE, A FACT THAT HAS PLAYED INTO THE HANDS OF THE GOZ, WHICH HAS MADE A RHETORICAL DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE RULE OF LAW ON THE FARMS AND THE RULE OF LAW IN GENERAL. THIS IS A NON-STARTER, AND ANGELO HAS NOT BEEN ABLE TO QUASH THIS CYNICAL DIFFERENTIATION. WE BELIEVE THAT LAND REFORM IS AN INTERNAL ZIMBABWEAN MATTER, AND THAT THERE SHOULD BE A FRANK AND OPEN DIALOGUE BETWEEN ALL STAKEHOLDERS. WE SEE NO PERCENTAGE IN GETTING IN THE MIDDLE OF A GOZ-CFU DIALOGUE, FOR EXAMPLE. THE MALLOCH-BROWN INITIATIVE APPEARS TO BE COLLAPSING, ALTHOUGH WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE IN THE UTILITY OF GENUINE DIALOGUE. END COMMENT.

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